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TRUTH

HUDSON TERCENTENARY

FRANK CHAMBERLAIN

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FROM

Frank Chamberlain.





Hudson Tercentenary

AN HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

REGARDING THE OBJECT
AND QUEST OF AN ALL-
WATER ROUTE FROM
EUROPE TO INDIA; THE
OBSTACLES IN THE WAY;
AND ALSO HUDSON'S VOY-
AGE TO AMERICA IN 1609
AND SOME OF ITS RESULTS



BY
FRANK CHAMBERLAIN



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HUDSON TERCENTENARY

Let us turn back the pages of history and take a cursory view of what gave the wonderful stimulus to maritime adventure; and what so long delayed the discovery of the western world by the Europeans.

Civilized mankind scarcely secures the *necessaries* of life before the desire for the *luxuries* springs up and is cherished.

For untold centuries all of eastern Asia forbade the entrance of foreigners into its territories. To Europeans it was an unknown land.

In the year 326 B. C. Alexander the Great marched his conquering Macedonian legions against the myriads of Asiatic troops, subdued them and marched on to the Hindus, where he "improvised a fleet" for his army, sailed down that river, called Sacred, to the Indian ocean. Astonished at the wealth of the country and having amassed precious gems and hundreds of millions of dollars he returned loaded with his treasures up the Euphrates, to that most wonder-

ful city of ancient times, Babylon, where he died. He opened the western doors of India, which exposed its great wealth, excited the avarice of the small number of Greeks who knew of his exploits; and for centuries it was the Europeans' Eldorado, which ultimately, by its luxury and effeminacy, undermined western manhood and led to the decay of Greece and Rome.

Asia, beyond the Euphrates, except by a few, was an unknown country to Europeans until Marco Polo in 1271 A. D., in the company of his father and uncle, met Kublai Khan, the Mongol Emperor, won his confidence and esteem and by him was entrusted with the most important missions. During the seventeen years he remained he visited the most important places in China, India and the East Indies, and returned to Italy loaded with the rarest, most precious gems and immense wealth, published a book telling his experience and picturing the East in the most roseate colors, generally emanating from fancy, but in this case resting upon facts of which he was able to furnish satisfactory proof.

The fact established that India—the East Indies had the gold, silver, precious gems and

stones, ebony, ivory, cloves, cinnamon, cassia, spices and the most beautiful and costly fabrics, articles not obtainable elsewhere and the great desiderata of the Europeans, the question arose as to how they could be obtained the most easily, quickly and cheaply. They could, without much difficulty, find their way to the Indian ocean, but the transportation thence to Europe must be by "the ship of the desert," the camel, across the Arabian desert and the Isthmus of Suez, "the bridge of nations" to the Mediterranean or by a more northerly route through the Caspian and Black seas. Caravans must be formed by the merchants and armed troops to protect them against the robbers. The land route by the caravans was slow and very expensive, and the hope was cherished that an all-water route might be found which would not only shorten the time, but greatly lessen the expense of transportation. For a considerable time the Phœnicians, occupying a little skirt of land on the eastern end of the Mediterranean, and the first distinctly commercial nation in the world's history, virtually monopolized this land transportation; and then distributed the articles along the shore of the Mediterranean,

where they had planted colonies clear up to the Pillars of Hercules. But Venice and Genoa, rival and wealthy cities of Italy, with fine harbors on this inland sea, sought the India trade, supplanted Phoenicia and became greatly enriched by it. The great desideratum—an all-water route from western Europe to the Indies—had not yet been found, but after the Italian cities had enjoyed, monopolized the trade with India for a period of 150 years, another little skirt of land on the west end of the Mediterranean and on the Atlantic ocean, Portugal, brought about a complete change in the transportation which deprived Venice and Genoa of that business.

Henry, Prince of Portugal, surnamed the Navigator, far in advance of his time in geographical knowledge and in the science of navigation, introduced the compass and the astrolabe, which he furnished with nautical maps and other guides for his mariners, whom he inspired to sail along the western coast of Africa and double the Cape of Good Hope. This, Bartholomew Diaz, a Portuguese navigator, did in 1486, and then it seemed certain that an all-water route from western Europe to India had been found, but it was not

an accomplished fact until Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese navigator, availing himself of Diaz's discovery of 1486, made a voyage in 1497 from Lisbon to Calicut (not Calcutta) in southwestern India.

Henry " the Navigator " was the father of what may be called ocean, in contradistinction to coast, navigation, scientific, instead of chance navigation, although he died before the Cape of Good Hope had been doubled. After Diaz had doubled the Cape of Good Hope in 1486, the furor of every mariner was to point the prow of his vessel toward India to share in its precious gems, its beautiful and costly fabrics, articles of luxury, and its great wealth. The India fever seized all the maritime nations of Europe, Portugal, Spain, France, the Netherlands, England, Sweden and Denmark. Christopher Columbus in 1492 sought, and thought he had found India by sailing westward. Then Rodrigo Lenzoli Borgia, a Spaniard, and the Pope, under the title of Alexander VI, assuming to be vice-gerent of the world, made a division of all the newly-discovered, or subsequently to be discovered, heathen lands between the two great Catholic powers, Spain and Portu-

gal, by drawing a line from pole to pole one hundred leagues west of the Azores and the Cape de Verde islands (this line was subsequently changed) and declared that all lands discovered west of that line and not belonging to some Christian prince should belong to Spain, and all similar lands east of that line should belong to Portugal. The two great maritime and exploring nations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were Portugal and Spain — the former in the east and the latter in the west. Alas! their great fame is in the past. Spain hoped to reach the Indies by a shorter all-water route, sailing *westward*, and that was Columbus's mission, purpose and hope.

The edict of the Pope did not, in the least, restrain France, England or the Netherlands from attempting to make discoveries, and France, England, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark granted charters to companies of their own subjects, granting them great and exclusive rights, and calling them East India companies. At the close of the year A. D. 1600, Queen Elizabeth chartered the English East India Company with most extraordinary rights and privileges, and thus laid the foundations for Great Britain's Asiatic empire.

The Dutch East India Company charter was granted in 1602, to trade to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope and the Strait of Magellan for twenty-one years, and no other of the East India companies has been so successfully managed. The Dutch have derived large revenue from the islands they still hold there, viz.: Java, the Moluccas or Spice islands, a large part of Borneo, Sumatra, Celebes and several small islands in the Malay Archipelago.

Cornelius Hartman, a Dutch navigator, who had spent some time in Lisbon, Portugal, returned in 1594 to Amsterdam, where he gave such a glowing account of the rich and wonderful products of the East, which covered the quays of the Tagus, in Lisbon, that nine prominent merchants of Amsterdam formed a company, equipped a fleet of four ships, fitted for war (a war then prevailing between Holland and Spain) and for trade, and put Hartman in command. He followed the Portuguese route, and two years later returned with cargoes far surpassing the expectations or even the hopes of the company.

Seeing this Indian wealth upon their own docks, other associations and companies were formed in

the Netherlands to engage in this lucrative trade. Rivalry between them became so great as to diminish the profits that a consolidation of the companies was effected by Barneveldt. This company consisted of six branches called chambers, each of which was to be managed by its own directors (originally fifty-three in all) in different parts of the country.

A general council of seventeen directors (Amsterdam eight, Zealand four, Rotterdam, Hoorn and Enkhuizen each one, and the seventeenth to be chosen by the chamber of Zealand, the Maas and North Holland) were by a majority of votes to *determine all voyages*. This arrangement was made to protect the small chambers against the power and policy of Amsterdam if against their interests. Each locality was secured in its due proportion of the business of the company. Each chamber had the exclusive management of its ships sent out by it and was held responsible for the property coming into its possession. The general council of seventeen did not meet often, but the subordinate chambers could legislate upon subjects appropriate, and which did not trench upon the general policy and course of the company.

The Dutch East India Company was clothed with extraordinary powers and privileges and became very wealthy; not alone in the pursuit of the East India trade, but by capturing in the West Indies galleons containing great quantities of gold and silver, which the Spaniards, by the most cruel methods, had taken in Mexico and Peru.

The ancients held different opinions about the form, dimensions, the proportion of land to water, of the earth, and as to whether it was motionless, around which all the universe revolved, as the great center, and of supreme importance, or whether it was merely a satellite revolving around the sun. It seems flat and the heavenly bodies seem to revolve around it. Others thought the earth was a sphere because "the sphere is the most perfect form; it was the center of the universe because that is the place of honor; and it is motionless, because motion is less dignified than rest." Some believed that the earth is round and rests upon the ocean. Homer (900 B. C.) taught that the earth is flat, and so, too, did some of the learned men of Greece and Rome, in the Augustan age. The great Church of Rome, of unequaled influence and power, taught that the earth is flat

and the center of the universe and interdicted, and for centuries punished as heretics, those denying the infallibility of the Popes and teaching otherwise. It is probable that about 600 B. C., Thales of Miletus, one of the "Seven Wise Men of Greece," a famous astronomer and geometer, was the first to teach that the earth is round. About 550 B. C. Pythagoras, the renowned Greek philosopher and mathematician, taught that "the earth is a globe which admits of antipodes; that it is in motion; is not the center of the universe, but revolves around the sun." Plato, Aristotle, Hipparchus, Pliny, Cicero, Virgil, Ovid, Eratosthenes and many others, the most eminent scholars of their times, believed that the earth is a sphere; and Eratosthenes, an Alexandrian philosopher, astronomer, geometer and geographer about 210 B. C. thought that he had not only proved that by scientific astronomical observations but also the speed of the earth in its revolutions; its magnitude and also the relative proportion of its constituent elements of land and water.

Claudius Ptolemy, about 150 A. D., a celebrated Alexandrian astronomer, geographer and mathematician, held the opinion and promulgated it,

that the earth is a sphere and that the sun, planets and stars revolve around it as the grand center. He was the founder of the Ptolemaic System which was almost universally received for 1,350 years, when the system of Copernicus (a revival of the system of Pythagoras) permanently displaced it, notwithstanding the violent opposition, extending to persecution, of the Church of Rome against it.

Claudius Ptolemy had calculated the equatorial girth of the earth to be 20,400 miles. Making allowance for latitude, the circumference at the Canaries would be about 18,000 miles and the diameter about one-third of that, or 6,000 miles. Columbus was a student of everything accessible concerning geography and navigation and a devout Roman Catholic. He credited the statement in the Apochrypha of the Bible, Second Esdras, chapter 6, verse 42, which says: "Upon the third day Thou didst command that the *waters* should be gathered in the *seventh part of the earth*, six parts has Thou dried up and kept them," etc., etc.

If Ptolemy's calculation had been correct and Esdras's statement reliable, 18,000 miles divided by 7, giving a quotient of 2,571 miles, would have been the distance Columbus would have had to

sail from the Azores to Japan. He estimated he might have to sail 4,000 miles (to reach the west coast of India facing Europe) by being deflected from a straight course. The real distance from the Canaries to Japan is 12,000 miles, and the relative proportion of salt water on the surface of the earth to the land is *three-quarters*. Columbus, believing that he was inspired and commissioned by God to convert the heathen, sailed and thought he had reached India, called the natives Indians (so they have been called ever since) and he died so thinking.

If the magnitude of the earth — its diameter had been ascertained and the relative proportion of land to water with the known longitude and latitude of India, then the problem was easily solved that an all-water route to India from Europe, whether by sailing westward or northward, would greatly diminish the distance (about 8,000 miles) covered by sailing around Cape Good Hope. That was a great desideratum — the aim of individuals and nations, which would seem to warrant the belief of speedy accomplishment. Let us not forget that we must consider the conditions

of the past and not of the twentieth or nineteenth centuries.

Notwithstanding "Henry, the Navigator" applied the inventions and equipments so indispensable to scientific navigation, and did all he could to inspire his sailors to sail around South Africa, it was forty years before that was an accomplished fact. So inferior, so inadequate, for ocean navigation, were the vessels then, and so little was known about ocean currents and the trade winds, that we can easily imagine that long sea voyages were discouraging.

There is no other class of men so superstitious as were the sailors, nor as are the sailors now. Everything that they see or hear of, that is unusual or they don't understand, frightens them as foreboding evil. It is an experience reported by so many of the famous navigators. You will recall Columbus's experience in his first voyage across the Atlantic, and not only the evasive answers he gave when the sailors noticed a variation of the needle and his threats to enforce his orders, that he might continue his voyage.

About 480 B. C., Pindar, the greatest of the lyric poets of Greece, declared that "Beyond

Cades (Cadiz in Spain) no man, however bold and brave, could pass; only a god might voyage those waters." The Atlantic was deemed a dangerous ocean. Thus we are reminded of some of the obstacles which delayed European discovery of the western world.

All that is known of the life, education, pursuits and achievements of Hudson, the Navigator, whose name is perpetuated in monuments ("more enduring than brass") upon the face of nature (its waters and land) in North America, is contained in the brief period of five years, or from 1606 to 1611, and is almost entirely contained in his log-books of his four voyages.

That so little about Hudson is known is not because efforts have not been made by competent and zealous investigators. It is greatly to be regretted that Richard Hakluyt and Samuel Purchas, Englishmen and contemporaries of Hudson, so greatly condensed in their writings the material they had and which is the chief source of information.

Hessel Gorritsz and Emanuel Van Meteren, Hollanders, also contemporaries of Hudson, historians, geographers, map-makers and publishers,

threw much side-light upon the discoveries which had been made in search of an all-water route to India (describing and illustrating by maps) before Hudson made any of his four famous voyages.

Coming down to the nineteenth century we find prominent among Hudson's biographers, Henry R. Cleveland's *Life of Hudson*, in Sparks' Library of American Biography, vol. 10, 1838; *Henry Hudson in Holland*, by the Hon. Henry C. Murphy, United States Minister at The Hague in 1859; Gen. John Meredith Read, Jr.'s elaborate historical research about Hudson published in 1866; Dr. G. M. Asher's article on Henry Hudson, printed for the Hakluyt Society in London, 1860; and John Knox Laughton, Professor of Modern History in Kings College since 1885, whose article appears in the Dictionary of International Biography, vol. 28, pp. 147-149, stating that Dr. Asher's article of 400 pages covers almost everything known about Henry Hudson, and Justin Winsor's *America*, eight volumes, in 1889; John Brodhead's *History of New York*, 1871, etc., etc.

We do know that Hudson, the Navigator's name was Henry and not Hendrick, as so often called and even now blazoned on the newest and finest

steamboat on the Hudson river, as evidenced in his contract with the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company, a copy of which follows. *We know that he was and remained an Englishman when on his return from his third voyage* (for the Dutch) the English government forbade him and all the Englishmen with him to enter any service other than for her own country.

As Hudson did not understand the Dutch language he employed, as his interpreter in his conference with the two Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company, a learned Hollander named Jodocus Hondius, who signed the contract as a witness.

CONTRACT.

“ On this eighth day of January in the year of our Lord 1609, the directors of the East India Company of the Chamber of Amsterdam, of the ten year's reckoning of the one part, and Mr Henry Hudson, Englishman assisted by Jodocus Hondius of the other part have agreed in manner following, to wit: That the said directors shall in the first place equip a small vessel or yacht of about thirty lasts (about 60 tons) burden with

which well provided with men, provisions, and other necessaries the aforesaid Hudson shall about the first of April sail in order to search for a passage by the North, around by the North side of Novaya Zemlya and shall continue thus along that parallel until he shall be able to sail southward to the latitude of 60 degrees. He shall obtain as much knowledge of the lands as can be done without any considerable loss of time, and if it be possible return immediately, in order to make a faithful report and relation of his voyage to the directors, and to deliver over his journals, log books and charts together with an account of everything whatsoever which shall happen to him during the voyage, without keeping anything back; for which said voyage the directors shall pay to the said Hudson as well as for his outfit for the said voyage as for the support of his wife and children the sum of 800 guilders; (about 320 dollars) and, in case (which God prevent) he do not come back or arrive hereabouts within a year the directors shall further pay to his wife 200 guilders in cash; and thereupon they shall not be further liable to him or his heirs, unless he shall either afterward or within the year arrive and have

found the passage good and suitable for the company to use; in which case the directors will reward the aforementioned Hudson for his dangers, trouble and knowledge in their discretion, with which the before mentioned Hudson is content. And in case the directors think proper to prosecute and continue the same voyage it is stipulated and agreed with the aforementioned Hudson that he shall make his residence in this country with his wife and children, and shall enter into the employment of no other than the Company and this at the discretion of the directors, who also promise to make him satisfied and content for such further service in all justice and equity. All without fraud or evil intent. In witness of the truth, two contracts are made hereof, of the same tenor and are subscribed by both parties and also by Jodocus Hondius as interpreter and witness.

“ Dated as above

Signed

“ DIRK VAN OS

“ J. POPPE

“ HENRY HUDSON

“ JODUCUS HONDIUS

“ Witness ”

The period of the tercentenary of Henry Hudson's exploration, in 1609, of the "Grande river," which for centuries has been called the "Hudson river," approaches, and already plans and preparations, on a grand scale, have been begun to commemorate that highly important event.

Albanians are especially interested and participating in the preparations for this celebration, for the site of Albany was deemed the most important in the New Netherlands, that of the city of New York alone excepted, and in many respects, early, even more important than that. For at Albany, near the confluence of the two great rivers of the territory of New York, the Hudson from the north and the Mohawk from the west, the Indians from the north and west came in their canoes with their peltry and furs, as a market place, designed by nature, for the exchange of articles between the red men and the white men for what they did not want, to get what, respectively, they did want. Then, too, it was where the Indians assembled to make their important treaties; where the governors of the American provinces met to consider and decide important measures; and where the first provincial congress,

in 1754, met and prepared a plan for the union of the colonies. It was, moreover, the great strategic point contended for by the French and English on American soil, and later by the English against the United States in the War of the American Revolution. Albany's charter, as a city, under the date of 1686, is the oldest unrevoked charter of a city in the United States and during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries no place in the western world surpassed it in historic interest; and for the last hundred years and more, as the capital of the Empire State, it has been considered, next to Washington, the most influential and important legislative center in the United States.

The Scandinavians were the earliest and boldest Arctic navigators and Iceland was their rendezvous. A great part of the Arctic shores that have been visited in modern times was known to the Scandinavians.

Columbus visited Iceland fifteen years before he sailed in 1492. S. Cabot went to North America in 1498 by way of Iceland. Scandinavians were seeking fisheries, as were the exploring nations of that period, and many of their acts were those of

freebooters. The Portuguese, the Spanish, and the French, the three nations which had followed in the track of Cabot and his English companions and had then arrived at the northern shores of America in search of a passage to Asia, did not abandon the newly explored region.

The Portuguese continued their surveys of the northern coasts most likely to discover advantageous fisheries. They advanced slowly along the shores of Newfoundland and then up to the mouth of Hudson strait, then through that strait, and at last into *Hudson bay*. With a certain number of ancient maps, ranging from 1529 to 1570, before us we can trace the progress step by step. In 1554 the Portuguese seemed not yet to have reached the mouth of the Hudson strait. In 1558 their geographical knowledge extended beyond the mouth of the strait and in 1570 they had reached the bay. The authorities for all this are our ancient geographical delineations. Much geographical intelligence in those days was kept secret. *We can therefore state with the greatest certainty that Hudson bay had been discovered before the publication of Ortelius's Atlas, published 1570. So said Dr. Asher.*

General J. M. Read, Jr., with competent assistants, much time and ample means, pursued a thorough, exhaustive examination to ascertain all possible about the Hudsons, of which Henry was one; and while the book is very interesting and many ingenious theories presented, yet rock-foundation of evidence seems to be lacking.

While neither the parents of Henry Hudson nor the date of his birth have been ascertained, that he was born in England, and almost beyond question in Hoddersdon (where so many of the Hudsons lived) in Hertfordshire, about seventeen miles north by east of London, seems settled. It, moreover, seems highly probable that our Henry Hudson was the grandson of Henry Hudson, a Londoner of great wealth and influence, one of the founders and the first president of the Muscovy or Russian Company which Sebastian Cabot suggested and of which he became its first governor, and that in the service of that company our navigator there had his first service and won the rank and distinction of captain. The Muscovy or Russian Company was formed of London merchant adventurers for the purpose of seeking an all-water route to the Indies by sailing north of

Russia and then down the Pacific, greatly shortening the route via the Cape of Good Hope. This company was held in such high esteem that both England and Russia granted it a charter in 1555. Several unsuccessful voyages for this purpose were made, the ice and storms proving insurmountable obstacles. It was in the employ of this company where, and in his own journal, our Henry Hudson first makes himself known as the captain of the "Hopeful," which sailed April 19, 1607, with ten sailors and his son John, a boy, aboard, with directions to explore the coast of Greenland, pass around it to the northeast, or directly under the Pole or, in his own words, "for to discover a passage by the North Pole to Japan and China." The "Hopeful" left Gravesend May 1, 1607, and in twenty-six days reached the Shetland Islands, where supplies were taken on. Four days after leaving these islands it was observed that the magnetic needle was deflected, which created consternation among the sailors. They believed the voyage was under an evil spell and would meet with disaster. Then the resources of the captain were evoked to carry out instructions or plans and prevent mutiny. Hudson managed his crew,

sailed along the east coast of Greenland and thence along the ice barrier to Spitzbergen (discovered by the Dutch in 1596), going as far north as $80^{\circ} 23'$. Prevented by ice, he sailed back to England, which he reached September 15, 1607.

The Muscovy Company still believed that an all-water and a very much shorter route than that via Cape of Good Hope from Western Europe to India could be found by the northeast, fitted out a vessel with a larger crew and gave our Captain Henry Hudson the command of it and under the same instructions as before. His son, as well as several others of his crew on the "Hopeful," went with him on this second voyage. He sailed from London April 25, 1608, and, obstructed by the ice, he could go no further than Nova Zembla, which had been discovered in 1553. He promptly returned to England and reported to the company. Hudson asked for more men and less rigid orders that he might make another voyage, but the company did not comply with his request. "It is not known whether it was because it had abandoned the hope of finding a northeastern route or had lost confidence in Hudson's ability." Navigators, like prophets, "are not without honor

save in their own country; ” as examples, Columbus, John Cabot, Verazzano, Magellan and Americus Vesputius, whose discoveries were for nations not their own.

Hudson, firm in the belief that he could find a much shorter all-water route than then was known, sought employment from the Dutch East India Company, which had heard of him as an able, brave and skilled navigator who had been in the employ of their rival — the English — an incentive to secure his services. Hudson was invited to Amsterdam to confer with the directors of the Dutch East India Company. He went and there met the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company. The Amsterdam directors thought favorably of securing Hudson’s services for the Dutch East India Company — at all events to prevent him from entering any other service and it is said they asked him to come to them a year later for employment as a matter of that importance could be acted on only by the Council of Seventeen. This was to postpone the matter, much to Hudson’s disappointment and detriment — ending, possibly, in mere talk. The Dutch East India Company was then the most

prosperous of the East India companies and was really more anxious to prevent any other company from discovering a new all-water route (*the company had resolved to do that at any cost*) than to find one themselves. However, the Amsterdam directors did not hoodwink Hudson by their excuse for delay, which would bind him for a year and leave them free. A former director of the Dutch East India Company, who thought he had been ill treated by the company, resigned, became a bitter opponent of the company and resided in Paris. He told Hudson of the duplicity and purpose of the Amsterdam directors in holding him in suspense. The then French King, Henry IV, felt chagrined that France, through oversight or neglect, had not in any due proportion, considering her dignity and importance, shared in the India trade and that her expeditions to Canada had not proved a success, determined to seek and obtain an experienced navigator to take command of a well-equipped expedition in quest of the best all-water route to India. The French King was advised to communicate with James Lemaire, a Dutch navigator of great wealth and residing in

Paris. He did so and Lemaire knew Hudson and named him as the best man for the position.

Governments employ a secret service to keep a close watch upon other governments and to report promptly what they are doing and contemplating. King Henry learned about Henry Hudson's conference with the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company who wanted to bind him to wait a year before engaging again in a voyage of discovery for India and then come to them for employment.

The French King gave orders that Hudson be engaged at once on most liberal terms in the service of France, but the Amsterdam directors learned of his decision and without any further delay entered on the 8th of January, 1609, in a contract with Hudson which resulted in the Dutch claim of New Netherlands instead, perhaps, of extended French claims in the New World. This contract has been very sharply commented upon as being very illiberal in the compensation stated for the services and great risk that Hudson was to undergo; that while clear in terms it was not in perfect good faith for as it claimed to be an act of the Dutch East India Company and was

signed by *only two of the directors of the Amsterdam chamber who had no authority to bind the company in such a matter and that therefore it was voidable if for any reason the company so desired*. It might have been merely an inexpensive scheme to prevent Hudson from entering any other employ. Then, too, it appeared singular that either the Amsterdam directors or Hudson should want to attempt the *northeastern* route which so often had resulted in failure before our Hudson's time and that Hudson himself as a master had signally failed in two expeditions and probably before that while as a mariner in the employ of the Muscovy Company. It seemed as though Hudson who, after commanding two searches for the Muscovy Company wanted greater freedom in the pursuit and so asked of that company. The belief on the part of some was that there was a secret agreement or understanding between the contracting parties that Hudson might, or was really, to ignore the contract which was given to the public as a blind. While subsequent events gave color, plausibility to these thoughts, they were merely conjectures, for it is most remarkable that there has so little

documentary evidence been found about a man whose name appears so often and so prominently in North America. Hudson's last voyage was for three wealthy Englishmen, viz.: Sir Thomas Smythe, Sir Dudley Digges and John Wolstenholme. Doubtless very much of Hudson's writings were not made public — probably publication at that time was forbidden, fearing that rival navigators would thereby gain some information to their advantage and to the detriment of Hudson's employers. Then, too, it has been thought and said that if Hudson's writings had been published in full some things would have been revealed that at least some of the contracting parties were anxious to conceal. Although nearly 300 years have passed and the public has not been fully enlightened on this subject there still remains the belief that Hudson's writings about his contracts for searching for an all-water and shorter route to India will yet be discovered and published. To engage in any great and hazardous undertaking there must be some adequate motive. Considering the high demands and promises made to bold and skillful navigators (perhaps in compensation, rank, and authority none comparable

with the case of Christopher Columbus) it is scarcely presumable that Henry Hudson entered the service of the Dutch East India Company merely for the paltry sum named in that contract and in a route which he himself on two occasions or more had found impracticable — presumably impossible. Henry Hudson, a bold and experienced navigator, well posted in the discoveries made by maritime discoverers especially in the New World; in the discoveries in geography, geometry, and in possession of the latest and best maps of the world, surely had some strong motive, presumably a worthy ambition to become a discoverer of a new all-water route to India, and in his journal he told of his desire to seek that route by sailing *westward* when his instructions were distinct and positive to sail *north* and *east*.

If, then, such were the views and purposes of Hudson when he made the contract (which is quoted herein) with the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company, let us see, if we may, the real and principal motives actuating that company, so powerful, so dominant in the Netherlands, to engage Hudson by contract and whether either party was not going to live up to it in good

faith or whether the strong presumption is that it was merely a blind to deceive rivals and that there was another and very different secret agreement.

Charles V, German Emperor, was born at Ghent, Flanders, 1500. He was the eldest son of Philip, Archduke of Austria, and of Joanna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain. Philip's parents were the Emperor Maximilian and Marie, daughter and heiress of Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. On the death of his grandfather, Ferdinand, in 1516, Charles took possession of the throne of Spain by the title of Charles I.

On the death of Maximilian in 1519 Charles was elected German Emperor and crowned October 22, 1519, at Aix-la-Chapelle and received from the Pope the title of Roman Emperor, making him the most powerful monarch in Europe. A zealous Catholic, he aimed to nullify the doctrine taught by the reformer Martin Luther and to compel the Hollanders, the Netherlanders, to express their faith and belief in Ignatius Loyola, the reputed founder of the Society of Jesus — the Jesuits. It was not

Loyola but Torquemada, whose name, as the Chief Inquisitor, became a by-word and reproach. Justin Winsor, a high authority, said that Carlyle said, "Those Dutch are a strong people. They raised their land out of a marsh and went on for a long time breeding cows and making cheese and might have gone with their cows and cheese till doomsday. But Spain comes over and says, 'We want you to believe in Ignatius.' The Dutch replied, 'We are very sorry, but we cannot.' 'God, but you must,' said Spain, and went about it with guns and swords to make the Dutch believe in Ignatius." Thus began a religious war (usually the fiercest and most unrelenting) which, with some cessation of hostilities, lasted for nearly seventy years, down to 1648, when the independence of the Dutch Republic was acknowledged and it had become one of the foremost, if not really the foremost, power in Europe.

War (which Erasmus called "the malady of princes" and General Sherman called "hell"), begun by Charles I of Spain against the Netherlands, was continued by his son and grandson and resulted in driving out of Europe many of North America's early and most desirable settlers.

Many of the Dutch East India Company's vessels were equipped for war as well as for commerce and her East India possessions were active in building and fitting out ships which captured many and rich prizes from the Spaniards. The richest locality for capturing such prizes was in the West Indies, and what the Netherlands greatly needed was territory near there, where her ships could be sheltered, repaired, and obtain the needed supplies. Spain was in possession of nearly all of what is now the south of the United States, and France of Canada. The English held Virginia and claimed what is now called New England, but between the two was a territory that seemed free for settlement and there is reason to believe that the Dutch East India Company was aware of that fact and aimed to take it.

In 1497 and 1498 the Cabots, in the employ of Henry VII of England, sailed westward in search of a shorter all-water route to India, coasting along the Atlantic from a parallel of latitude about the same as that of the Straits of Gibraltar clear up to Hudson straits, where the icebergs prevented further advance. Having landed and planted the English flag, they claimed the country

for the British crown and under their discovery the English claim in North America rested. On a German map made in 1515 America is represented as a large island in the western Atlantic. Magellen, in whose honor the straits near Cape Horn, South America, were named, sailed around the globe in 1519-21, proved that America was a continent and the world a sphere. Sir Francis Drake, in 1577-79, also circumnavigated the globe. In 1728 Vitus Behring sailed through the straits which bear his name and proved that America is no part of Asia. From 1499 to 1504 Americus Vesputius, a Florentine navigator and explorer, made, in the employ of Spain, four voyages to the east coast of South America and built a fort on the coast of Brazil, and from him, or rather in his honor, the western continent was named "America" — the name first appearing in a little pamphlet published in France in 1507 by Waldseemuler, a German geographer, who gave as his reason for the name the following, viz.: "The fourth part of the world having been discovered by Americus, it may be called the land of Americus or America."

Between the years 1512 and 1542 Ponce de Leon,

Balboa, Cortez, Narvaez, Cabeza de Vaca, De Soto, Pizarro, and Coronado, all for Spain, had made extensive and very important discoveries in what are now the southern of the United States, the Mississippi river, Mexico, and Peru. Some of these men became infamous by their horrible crimes. They were arrogant and frank. Balboa, in 1513, was the first European to discover the "South sea" (the Pacific ocean), and "wading into its waters drew his sword and declared that the Kings of Spain should hold possession of the 'South sea' and of its coasts and islands 'while the earth revolves, and until the universal judgment of mankind.'" Cortez bluffly declared in a few words when speaking to the Mexicans the motives of the Spanish as follows: "We Spaniards are troubled with a disease of the heart for which we find gold and gold only a specific remedy." These discoverers, explorers, freebooters from Spain in her vast territory New Spain, merited the just contempt not only of the ancient civilizations of Mexico and Peru but also of the whole enlightened world. It seems to have been the firm belief of the Spaniard for centuries

that he is made of a finer material than any other nation and destined to rule and others to obey.

The French disputed the Spanish claims to North America and established a colony of Huguenots in South Carolina, but France's discoveries and possessions in North America were principally in the north. Cartier discovered and explored the St. Lawrence river in 1535, and that was thought to be a part, if not all, of the waterway through the continent of America to the South sea or Pacific ocean en route to India. No nation was more zealous and successful than France in making discoveries and settlements in Canada, and what ultimately became the north-western of the United States along the upper lakes and the upper Mississippi river, by those wonderful religious orders, the Franciscans and Jesuits.

Eighty-five years had elapsed after the discovery in North America by the Cabots, under which the English based their claim to the territory, before they made any attempt at colonization or even to establish a permanent settlement. In 1584 that unique, able, versatile, vain Queen Elizabeth of England granted a most remarkable charter to, at one time her especial favorite, the

highly gifted but eccentric Sir Walter Raleigh, to lay claim to any land in the west "not actually possessed by any Christian prince." Raleigh sent out several expeditions to make a settlement on Roanoke island, off the coast of North Carolina. It was represented to the Queen as a remarkably fine land, so that she named it in her own honor as the Virgin Queen Virginia and thereupon knighted Raleigh. Raleigh, though he made determined and prolonged efforts and at great personal expense to establish permanent English settlements in America, failed. To Sir Walter Raleigh is given the credit or curse of having discovered in Virginia a weed which King James called "the vilest of weeds" and Edmund Spenser, the famous poet, "divine tobacco." To Sir Walter also is generally given the credit of having introduced the most valuable of all the vegetables known to man — the potato.

Justin Winsor, a distinguished American historian, said that the scheme to form a West India Company was first broached in 1592 by William Usselinx, an exiled Antwerp merchant. It was many years before it could be accomplished. The longing for a share in the riches of the New World

conducted in the meantime to the establishment of the "Greenland Company" about 1596 and the pretended search by its ships for a northwestern passage led to a supposed first discovery of the Hudson river, if we may rely upon an unsupported statement by the officers of the West India Company in an appeal for assistance to the Assembly of the Nineteenth in 1644. According to this statement ships of the "Greenland Company" had entered the North and Delaware rivers in 1598; their crews had landed in both places and had built small forts to protect them against the inclemency of the weather and to resist the attacks of the Indians.

A company of English merchants had organized to trade to America in the first year of the seventeenth century. Their first adventure to Guiana and Virginia were not successful yet gave a new impetus to the scheme originally conceived by Usselinx. A plan for the organization of a West India Company was drawn up in 1606, according to the excited Belgian ideas. This company was to have an existence of thirty-six years; to receive during the first six years assistance from all the United Provinces, and to be managed

in the same manner as the East India Company. It was not consummated. Olden-Barneveldt, the Advocate of Holland and one of the most prominent and influential members of the peace party, foresaw that the organization of a West India Company with the avowed purpose of obtaining most of its profits by preying on Spanish commerce in American waters would only prolong the war. Usselinx's plan was to compel Spain by these means to evacuate Belgium and thus give her exiled sons a chance to return to their old home. A wholesale departure of the shrewd, industrious, and skilful Belgians would have deprived Holland of her political pre-eminence and have left her an obscure and isolated province. The conflicting views and claims of the provinces caused the scheme to fail until after Olden-Barneveldt, accused of high treason, was tried, condemned, and beheaded in 1619. Subsequently Maurice of Nassau took up the scheme of forming the Dutch West India Company. Private ships sailing from Dutch ports had not been idle in the meantime; in 1607 we hear of them in Canada trading for furs. Belgium and the Netherlands, compelled to become maritime

nations, while other circumstances directed to commercial pursuits, had become the common carriers of the sea and the Netherlands especially had availed themselves of the discoveries made by the Cabots, Verrazano, and other adventurous explorers in the country succeeding Columbus' discovery of America. They thought Spain most assailable in the West Indies where they could prey upon their commerce and capture their treasures from Mexico and Peru. The first proposition to make such an expedition was submitted to the States General in 1581 by an English sea captain named Beets. It was refused. Later it gained favor and caused the formation of a West India Company really to fight Spain and not ignoring the search for a shorter route to India.

Before Henry Hudson's attempts to find a *northwest* passage to India six trials had been made and subsequently more than twenty-five more, and while it is claimed that Sir Robert McClure in his expedition in 1650-54 succeeded, it was only by abandoning his vessel and completing his way on ice. The discovery is of no practical utility.

In 1606 James I, King of England, Scotland

and Ireland, granted two charters — one to the London Company giving it power to establish settlements anywhere between the thirty-fourth and thirty-eighth degrees of north latitude (that is between Cape Fear and the Potomac); and the other to the Plymouth Company granting it the territory in Northern Virginia between the forty-first and the forty-fifth degrees of north latitude (that is between the eastern end of Long Island and the northern limit of Nova Scotia), with the right to establish settlements therein. Each of these grants extended 100 miles inland. The territory between these two companies (from thirty-ninth to forty-first degrees), embracing what is Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, and a little of New York, was open to settlement by either of these companies, provided that neither should make a settlement within 100 miles of the other.

It is not presumable that the alert, watchful, shrewd Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company were ignorant of the discoveries, explorations, and important events in the western world nor of the charters of 1606 granted by King James which seemed to leave an unoccupied and an unknown territory extending from the thirty-

eight to the forty-eight degrees of North latitude which would furnish the Netherlands a desirable base for their operations in America against Spain. Perhaps that territory might be secured under the right of prior discovery if a small craft was sent out nominally to sail northeast as a blind but really westward for the double purpose either of finding a shorter route to India or obtaining a desirable foothold in the New World.

Let us see whether we may ascertain more about Hudson's views, preparation, and knowledge before the contract was entered into with the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company. In his second voyage in the employ of the Muscovy Company, under date of August 7, 1608, he made the following entry into his journal: "I used all diligence to arrive in London, for being at Nova Zembla on the 8th day of July and void of hope of a northeast route except by Vaygats, for which I was not fitted to try or prove, I therefore resolved to use all means I could to sail to the *northwest* (which would have been in direct violation of his instructions) and to make trial at Lumley's Inlet and Captain Davis Straits, hoping to run into it a hundred leagues and return." He

did not carry out his resolve but indicated his desire to seek a *northwestern* passage then.

Henry Hudson was not wild, erratic, nor a rover. Perhaps no one whom Hudson met in London so much determined his course as did Captain John Smith, a very remarkable English adventurer — a daring rover in early life, entering military service in several of the European governments, captured, imprisoned, and escaped to play such a prominent part in establishing the first permanent English settlement in Virginia in the United States. Captain John Smith's name is almost always associated with that of Pocahontas (the daughter of the famous Chief Powhatan) who while yet a girl but twelve years is said to have interposed her body and thereby saved the life of Captain Smith from the uplifted war clubs of the Indians about to descend upon him. Captain Smith also corresponded with Hudson, gave him maps of North America and advised him as to the course to be pursued in seeking a westward watercourse to India. Perhaps the maps most serviceable to Hudson in his voyage westward in 1609 were those of New France, which plainly represented the Grande

river (subsequently called the Hudson river), and were published in the sixteenth century. Hudson was also a theorist. He believed in an "Open Polar Sea" and so far as is known was the first to promulgate that theory, entertained and followed by searchers after the North Pole. Hudson made the acquaintance and won the friendship of learned geographers in Amsterdam, prominent among them was the Reverend Peter Plancius, who said it was reasonable that the sea should be open near the Pole where the sun shines incessantly for months though with less heat than where it shines only a few hours by day and the hours of the night intervening, cooling. Hudson said his experience convinced him, for after passing beyond a certain line (about 66° north latitude) the sea became more open as he went further north. This Doctor Peter Plancius was a member of the Reformed Church and as such driven from his Belgian home by the Spaniards, he heartily co-operated with Usselinx in his plan to form a West India Company. He was often in consultation with Hudson in Amsterdam and to his chapter on "Norumbega (said to be somewhere in New England) et Virginia" he added a map

which, imperfect in some respect — incorrect in its latitudes — was serviceable to Hudson in his westward voyage. The French map of about 1517 and the map of Thomas Hood, an Englishman, published in 1594, which shows under latitude 40° north (New York city is $40^{\circ} 43'$ north) the mouth of a river called Rio de San Antonio, the name given by the earliest Spanish discoverers to what later on became known as the Hudson river. In this connection it may not be amiss to call attention to the historical fact that Giovanni da Verrazano, a Florentine navigator in the employ of Francis I, King of France, entered the New York bay and saw at least the mouth of the river which the French called the “Grande river” in 1524, eighty-five years before Henry Hudson saw it. It is further claimed that soon after the French built a fort on Castle Island near Albany and there carried on a trade in furs with the Indians. Some historians discredit this French claim, which, however, seems sustained though it never resulted in advantage to the French. A map made by Vaz Dornado at Lisbon in 1571 gives the Hudson river in almost its entire course from the mountains to the bay. A copy of this map made

in 1580, which went to Munich, was probably seen by Dr. Plancius, Hudson's friend and adviser. *Johannes de Laet*, a director of the West India company and a copatroon of Rensselaerwick with Kilian Van Rensselaer, admits in his book that the object of the West India Company was *war on Spain, and he congratulates the country upon its success.*

Jean Wagenaar, a Dutch historian, a histriographer, the secretary of the city of Amsterdam, held in the highest esteem, who had free access to the archives and whose statements are not to be discredited, says the company "*sent out a skipper to discover a passage to China by the Northwest not by the Northeast.*" *A resolution of the States of Holland, quoted by this same authority, proves that previous to Hudson's voyage, the Dutch knew that they would find terra firma north of the Spanish possessions and contiguous to them.*

Resolved, "That by carrying the war over to America, the Spaniards be attacked there where their weakest point is, but whence they draw the most of their resources."

As much has appeared in this article concerning

the sincerity of the motives actuating the parties to the contract of January 8, 1609, and as doubts and adverse criticisms had been expressed and no authority given therefor — they seemed conjectures — perhaps not unreasonable, plausible but requiring confirmation — *proof* to be entitled to credit.

Not, however, until the latter half of the nineteenth century was any documentary evidence on that subject obtainable and published, though efforts had been made before.

The Hon. Henry Cruse Murphy, born in Brooklyn in 1810, prepared in the High School for Columbia College, where he graduated with honor in 1830, studied law, was admitted to practice in 1833, married in 1834, mayor of Brooklyn, member of two State constitutional conventions, five times elected to the Senate of the State of New York, a gentleman of culture and refinement, author and founder of the Brooklyn Eagle, whom, in 1857, President Buchanan appointed Minister to The Hague, exceptionally well qualified to represent the United States. His pleasing manners enabled him to obtain most valuable information about the war between Spain and the Netherlands,

and also about the early settlement of North America. He first gives to the public an exact copy of that contract of January, 1609, where there could be no doubt that the navigator's name was *Henry*, not Hendrick.

The Minister says: "The following memoir is the result of an investigation made for the purpose of ascertaining more precisely than has hitherto been explained, the circumstances which originated the voyage made on behalf of the Dutch East India Company by Henry Hudson; the motives, purposes and character of its projectors and the designs of the navigator himself at the time he sailed upon that expedition. We have examined the records of the East India Company, comprising the registers or book of resolutions of the general of the company, styled the Council of Seventeen, and the Chambers of Amsterdam, Zealand, etc., with some other documents among the archives of the Kingdom at The Hague, where all the books and papers of the company have been brought from the several chambers, have been arranged and kept. A copy of the contract between Hudson and two members of the Chamber of Amsterdam (as given on previous pages), was

found appended to a history of the company never published, but prepared at its request by Mr. P. Van Dam, who held the position of counsel of the company for the extraordinary period of fifty-four years, that is, from 1652 until his death in 1706."

The Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch East India Company had, among its members, enterprising merchants who had a particular motive in seeking to secure Hudson's services. They wished to forestall others, and especially their own country, in the discovery, and thus prevent any interference with their chartered monopoly of the East India trade. The evidence of this policy distinctly appears in the resolutions and proceedings of the general council of all the chambers of the company, called the "Council of Seventeen."

The company itself, shortly after its organization, took into consideration the expediency of making an attempt to explore the northern passage and of soliciting the necessary privileges from the government. It is quite apparent, therefore, that the fears and the hopes of opening that route still existed in the minds of some of the directors.

The Council of Seventeen determined finally

that it was inexpedient to make the trial. Their determination was, however, accompanied by a remarkable resolution. The final action of the Council of Seventeen took place on the 7th of August, 1603, and is thus entered in the minutes: "It is likewise for deliberation and resolution whether the voyage by the North shall also be undertaken and negotiations be had with the Noble Lord States in regards to terms and privileges for that purpose seeing that some private persons have already been in communication with said Lords; the more so as this matter at the meeting of the 17 on the 27th of Feby last past was postponed as appears by the 17th section of the proceedings of that meeting."

In the margin is the following disposition of that subject: "The contents hereof are rejected as it is deemed not serviceable to the Co, and therefore if this navigation should be undertaken by any private person it ought by all means to be prevented." The company was realizing by the southern route enormous profits, dividing among its stockholders 37 per cent. for its first two years.

The States General, by a decree on the 1st of July, 1606, expressly prohibited from navigating

by the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan, and in the following September, by another decree, the subjects of the Netherlands were prohibited from carrying on the trade.

The entire period is so short, concerning which we know anything about Henry Hudson, do we really know enough of him to form a true and fair estimate of his character?

We do know that Hudson had made two (and we don't know how many more) voyages north of Siberia, in the employ of the Muscovy Company, intending to go east and then south, down to Cathay, but did not succeed. He had, however, been exposed, inured to the arctic colds, privations and dangers, and had won the rank of captain. What did he know about the recently explored seas and lands or what more did he need to know about them, if he was in the employ of the Dutch East India Company through its Amsterdam Chambers, two directors to pursue the same course he had on the two voyages he had for the Muscovy Company?

Before Henry Hudson had signed the famous contract on the 8th of January, 1609, he had been

a careful geographical student, as far as he had opportunity.

About the beginning of the seventeenth century, after the Belgians, on account of their religious views, had been expelled from Belgium, and many of them gone to Holland — mostly to Amsterdam, then that city and London, England, became the great rendezvous for navigators, discoverers, would-be discoverers, or explorers, to discuss matters, compare notes, and get all information possible on such subjects.

The Muscovy Company had headquarters in London, where Hudson would go, and there he met, it is known, Captain John Smith, and it is probable that there he met and formed a favorable opinion of Jodocus Hondius, who was his interpreter, adviser, and witness to the contract of January 8th. He was an educated gentleman, a minister of the Reformed Church, a Belgian, driven out of his country, went to London, a geographer, map-maker and portrait painter. He painted Queen Elizabeth's portrait. The center around which the Belgians then gathered as their brightest man in discovery was Peter Plancius, another Belgian, a Calvinistic minister driven

from Belgium, and who had settled in Amsterdam, and was a devoted friend and adviser of Hudson. Hudson before he had engaged with the Amsterdam directors had seen and examined the most important maps of the French, English, Spanish and Portuguese, and especially of the Arctic regions, New York and Canada, and had borrowed some of them from Plancius and Smith, and those that he wanted most were about the northwest and above 35° north latitude.

Hudson's friends were warm, zealous to help him, that they might lessen the power and vindictiveness of the Spaniards.

Captain John Smith sent Captain Henry Hudson important maps and instructions from Virginia, before Hudson set sail in the "Half Moon." Smith's advice to Hudson seems to have been to seek a passage to the Pacific ocean at about 40° north latitude or about 50° north latitude, or still farther north, and seek a passage through Lumly inlet or some other entrance into the Hudson bay. Hudson made extraordinary preparations if he did not expect to pursue that course for the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch East India Company.

That Henry Hudson first discovered, at least first reported, the "Open Sea" north of 66° north is conceded, and that has been confirmed by several Arctic explorers since — prominent among them Dr. Kane. That Sebastian Cabot discovered Hudson straits in about 1517 is admitted.

Jodocus Hondius, a warm friend of Hudson, tried to dissuade him from entering Hudson bay in hopes to find a passage to the Pacific, for he told him that a relative of his had explored the bay, and that there was no communication with the Pacific ocean.

Read, Jr., says our sense of the loss of Hudson's own journal in conclusion with his discovery of Delaware bay is indeed irreparable. Our sense of the loss is increased by the remembrance that the Hudson river, Hudson strait and Hudson bay had been visited long before Hudson explored them. George Weymouth had visited the mouth of Hudson straits.

Gerard Mercator's celebrated map of the world, made at Duisburg, Germany, in 1569, shows the French fort on the east side of the Grande (or Hudson) river. He outlined the Hudson to the

height of its navigation with the Mohawk as far as the French had explored it.

Winsor, 1520, vol. 4, p. 434. The Pompey Stone and Spaniards in New York State, found in Oneida county with its Spanish inscriptions and date of 1520, and the names of places given in their corruption by the Dutch in a grant conveying part of Albany county. We can no longer hesitate to believe that the heathen reported by Danskon and other writers mentioned before had some foundation, and that the Spaniards knew and had explored the country on the Hudson long before the Dutch came, but had thought, as Peter Martyr expresses it, after the failure of Estibon Comez and the Leconcrado d'Aillen "To the South, to the South for the great and exceeding riches of the Equator. They that seek gold must not go to the cold North." The Spaniards never considered New Netherlands of any value itself.

The Pompey Stone was located near where the Cardiff Giant was found and I do not build on it.

That Giovanni de Verazzano, in the French ship "La Dauphin," with a crew of fifty men, commissioned by Francis I, King of France, to make discoveries of new lands entered the lower and

upper bays of what now is New York, and the mouth of the North, or now called the Hudson river, is conceded. He tried to ascend the river, thinking it the water route to the South sea or the Pacific ocean on the way to Cathay and the East Indies. A violent gale sprang up and compelled him to go to sea, and his discoveries along the coast of North America, from Florida to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, resulted in the French claiming that territory as La Nouvelle France (New France), an extent of more than 1,100 miles.

The valuable furs and peltries of New France induced French merchants, ship owners and capitalists to send many vessels with merchandise to trade with the Indians. Some of these vessels sailed up the river (North or Hudson) to the height of its navigation, where the Mohawk enters into it. For protection and for a trading-house, the French built a fortified trading-house or castle in 1540, lying in the little bay on the west side of the river, called by the French the "Grande river," near the site of Albany. Before the castle was completed the island was inundated by a great freshet. The earliest Europeans, coming to what is now New York, did not come intending to settle,

but to gain in dealing in furs and peltry, and in that pursuit they became well acquainted with the topography of the country. On many of the maps of New France the Grande river is plainly represented from Sandy Hook to its navigable limits, about 175 miles.

Sincerely believing that the honors awarded Henry Hudson, the famous navigator, are not on the true basis, and that at the tercentenary they are likely to be perpetuated against historical facts, I have cited evidence and will add but two more from his own countrymen, viz.: John Knox Laughton, Professor of History in Kings College, London, since 1885, and C. M. Asher, LL. D., "Henry Hudson, the Navigator. The original documents in which his career is recorded printed in London, 1860, for the highly distinguished historical body, the Hakluyt Society."

Professor Laughton, in the Dictionary of National Biography, vol. 28, pp. 148 and 149, says: "Hudson's personality is shady in the extreme, and his achievements have been the subject of much exaggeration and misrepresentation. The River, the Strait, the Bay and the vast tract of land which bears his name have kept his memory

alive; but in point of fact not one of these was discovered by Hudson. All that can be seriously claimed for him is that he pushed his *explorations* further than his predecessors and left them a more distinct but still imperfect record. It has been conclusively shown by Dr. Asher that the River, Strait and the Bay were all marked in maps many years before the time of Hudson.

“ In April, 1614, Hudson’s widow applied to the East India Company for some employment for another son, she being left very poor. The company considered that the boy had a just claim on them, as his father had perished in the service of the commonwealth; they accordingly placed him for nautical instruction in the Samaritan and gave five pounds toward his outfit.” Henry Hudson, born about 1560.

Dr. Asher, in his publication, says: “ *Hudson river, Hudson strait and Hudson bay remind every educated man of the illustrious navigator by whom they were explored.* But though the name of Henry Hudson possesses the preservative against oblivion, little more has been done in its behalf, and few persons have any accurate notion of the real extent of its merits. By considering

Hudson as the discoverer of the three mighty waters that bear his name, we indeed both over-rate and underrate his deserts. For it is certain that these localities *had* repeatedly been visited, and even drawn on maps and charts long before he set out on his voyages.

Special attention is called to Justin Winsor's "America," and to Henry Cruse Murphy's "Hudson in Holland." The naming of the territorial empire of Prince Rupert's land upon which Hudson, perhaps, never set his foot, seems more than strange.


The retrospect has been long, and though only by glances, far from complete, doubtless it has been tedious, but to differ from public opinion it seemed necessary to give strong reasons.

Does it not, then, seem that the contract made by the Amsterdam directors and Henry Hudson was rather a blind, and for political reasons, than genuine?

Some historians say that Henry Hudson, when in the employ of the Dutch East India Company, set sail from Amsterdam March 25, 1609, and others April 4, 1609 — there is no discrepancy, for the former is what is called Old Style, and the

latter New Style, of reckoning time. Some authorities state Hudson had two vessels, namely, the " Good Hope " and the " Half Moon." The contract between the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company and Henry Hudson names the " Half Moon " and no other. Moreover, the Hon. Henry C. Murphy, when United States Minister to Holland, ascertained from the archives that the Amsterdam directors of the Dutch East India Company did have, in 1608, a vessel named " Good Hope," which sailed April 15, 1608, for the East Indies, and was captured by the Spaniards.

The crew of the " Half Moon," under Henry Hudson as master, consisted of about twenty, part Dutch and part English, many of them had served under him while he was in the employ of the Muscovy Company — his son being one of that number. The " Half Moon " was a yacht of about eighty tons burden. Hudson followed the route he had taken when in the employ of the Muscovy Company until he met with the same obstacles as in his previous expedition, namely, impenetrable ice, fogs and adverse winds which drove him backward. Then he submitted the choice to his crew



to decide whether they should sail to the coast of America, latitude 40° north (New Jersey coast) or in search of Davis strait latitude, about 62° north. Many of his crew had been sailors in southern warmer waters and chose the lower latitude, while then, it is said, Hudson preferred the other, but must submit to the wishes of the crew. On the 14th of May Hudson sailed the "Half Moon" westward, and a fortnight later reached the Faroe islands, replenished his water casks, and set sail again, making slow progress for a month against fierce gales, but on the 2d of July was at the grand banks of Newfoundland, with foremast gone and the sails badly torn. There they found a large fleet of Frenchmen fishing, but had no intercourse with them. Becalmed, the "Half Moon" men caught cod. Having made the needed repairs they set sail again, and on the 12th of July Hudson was gladdened by the sight of America's shores. The "Half Moon" entered and anchored in a safe and large harbor (probably Penobscot bay) on the coast of Maine. Here an unfortunate and wanton attack was made by the crew upon the natives, and Hudson at once set sail, and did not approach land again until August 3d, when he

sent five men ashore who returned loaded with rose trees and grapes. He supposed that the place was "Cape Cod," which Gonold had so named in 1602. Then for two weeks the "Half Moon" sailed south and came to the mouth of King James river in Virginia. Then Hudson coasted northerly and Friday, August 28th, entered the great Delaware bay. After exploring, he became satisfied that there was no passage-way there to China, and emerging from the bay went north, and September 3, 1609, entered and anchored under the shelter of what is called Sandy Hook. On the 12th of September Henry Hudson entered the Hudson river.

Drifting with the tide, he anchored over night (the 13th) just above Yonkers; on the 14th passed Tappan and Haverstraw bays, entered the Highlands and anchored for the night near West Point. On the morning of the 15th he entered Newburgh bay and reached Catskill on the 16th, Athens on the 17th and Castleton and Albany on the 18th, and then sent out an exploring boat as far as Waterford.

Some historians say that Hudson anchored at Hudson and sent a boat containing his mate and

four men further up the river to explore and report whether it seemed to be a water-way to the South sea (Pacific ocean) on the way to India. Becoming convinced that it did not, on the 23d of September he leisurely sailed down the river to its mouth. Hudson and his crew were greatly pleased with the grandeur and beauty of the river, the like of which they had never seen, passing through a fruitful, attractive country, which in their descriptions, they painted in glowing colors, justly deserved. It was the season of the year when nature, in that latitude, dons her variegated and most beautiful colors. Hudson had, along the river in many places where he stopped, many interesting and pleasant interviews with the Indians, gaining much information, and exchanging his trinkets for their valuable furs. The Indians, as a rule, were hospitable, entertaining the strangers with game and fruits, etc. There were a few regrettable incidents on Hudson's voyage up the river between the Indians and the crew, and it seems probable the latter were most blameworthy.

October 4, 1609, Henry Hudson and his crew in the "Half Moon" set sail from Sandy Hook for

Europe. On the homeward voyage some of the crew wanted to winter in Newfoundland and then in the spring search for a northwestern passage through Davis strait. Many were sick, but none of them were willing to go back to Holland as Hudson wished and was under obligations to do. Bear in mind that the master of a vessel then was not the autocrat that he now is. The crew had to be consulted and their decision controlled. A compromise was finally made that they should sail to Ireland. However, they reached Dartmouth, England, November 7, 1609, from which place Hudson made his report to the Dutch East India Company directors, and proposed to them to go out again for a search in the northwest, and that besides the pay, 1,500 florins should be laid out for an additional supply of provisions. Hudson also wanted six or seven of his men exchanged and his crew to number twenty.

It was a long time before the Dutch East India Company directors learned of the arrival of the "Half Moon" and heard from Hudson. Then they ordered the ship and crew to return as soon as possible. But when they were going to do so, Hudson and other Englishmen were commanded

by the government not to leave England, but to serve their own country. These things took place in January, 1610. After a detention of eight months in England the "Half Moon" reached Amsterdam in the summer of 1610.

April 17, 1610, Henry Hudson, in the vessel "Discovery," with many of his crew of former voyages, sailed from England in the service of three Englishmen, Sir Thomas Smythe, Sir Dudley Digges, and John Wolstenholme, in quest of an all-water route to India through the Davis strait. After entering the bay named Hudson, in his honor, he spent much time in trying to find an outlet from it to the Pacific ocean on the way to China, but unsuccessfully.

His crew became quarrelsome, and some of them mutinous. Among the worst were two he had favored most — one his mate, Juet, and another, a Mr. Green, a worthless, degenerate fellow. Juet was tried for insubordination — for attempting to incite to mutiny — found guilty and deposed. The winter of 1610-1611 was a hard one — their provisions were short, owing to a treatment of a native by some of the crew — they could obtain no game from the Indians, nor could they catch fish.

It was said, perhaps falsely, that Hudson became very tyrannical, and said something that his enemies thought he meant to prolong his scanty supplies by getting rid of several of the crew. June, 1611, a few days after leaving one of the most southern harbors of James bay (a southern portion of Hudson bay) where they had wintered, a mutiny broke out among the crew. Hudson was seized and bound, and he, his son and seven others, principally sick and infirm, were put in a small boat and set adrift upon the waves, destined soon to perish.

Thus ended, in tragedy, the career of a remarkable man, whose appearance upon the theater had not extended a half dozen years.

To commemorate the tercentenary of *Hendrick* Hudson's *discovery* of the Hudson river would be on a false basis — at war with historical facts. Hudson's name was *Henry* (as has been clearly established) and not *Hendrick*, as doubtless the Dutch wanted him to become a Hollander on his entering the service of the Dutch East India Company.

There is no evidence that Henry Hudson was ever in Holland except late in the year 1608 and

early in the year 1609. It is certain that he did not see Holland after his expedition on behalf of the Dutch East India Company, and that born in England, he remained an Englishman, for that government forbid him, as an Englishman, to leave and enter any other service.

It seems most remarkable that in Hudson's honor, as a discoverer, should have been named a *strait* (Hudson strait discovered by Sebastian Cabot in 1517), *Hudson bay*, the *Hudson Bay Company territory*, which originally included all the land which was drained into Hudson bay — territory ample for an empire — which Hudson did not discover and probably never put his foot on its soil, and the *Hudson river*, which has been clearly shown he did not discover. Unless the word *discoverer* has a different meaning from what the public understand by it and lexicographers primarily ascribe to it, Hudson, in none of these cases, was a *discoverer*. He was an *explorer*, and as such was a benefactor, and deserved credit. We would "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."

Henry Hudson was a bold, skillful navigator, a careful explorer, and had the ability and spirit

to have made important discoveries had the time and circumstances favored. It often happens that the discoverer, the inventor, merits less honor than the party coming after, who makes that discovery or invention serviceable — useful, as it had not been before. Robert Fulton was not the discoverer of the application of steam as a motive power in navigation, but he built the “Clermont” — propelled it by steam from New York to Albany, took the wind out of sails, revolutionized navigation, and received the honors. Samuel Finley Breese Morse was not the discoverer, the inventor of the electrical telegraph, but he made it serviceable — of practical utility — almost ignoring distance in the transmission of news, and he won the honors.

Henry Hudson did not discover a new and shorter water route to India, nor did he discover the Hudson river. He, however, did *explore* the Hudson river, and his glowing accounts of it, and the country through which it flows, attracted immigration, settlements, and was an important element in the founding of the new nation in the western world. The name, it is to be hoped, the *true* name of Hudson, *Henry*, and not *Hendrick*,

will be cherished, for whom living, so little was done. His widow, in extreme poverty, applied to the British government for another of her sons, and he was received and sent to the Government Naval School, and an allowance was made for his outfit. Henry Hudson appears to have had a large family.

The river which Hudson sailed up and down in 1609 has borne many names, given by different peoples at different times. The red men bestow names descriptive or characteristic — while there are no known laws or rules which the white men observe in naming. At the advent of the Europeans to North America many tribes of Indians inhabited the territory from Florida to the St. Lawrence, and back to the Mississippi river, and prominent among them were the Lenapes, to which the Mohicans belonged. These Indians called the river Mah-i-can-i-tuk, meaning “the flowing waters.” The Iroquois called it Co-hat-a-tea, or “river that flows from the mountains.” It was called the Mauritius, in honor of Prince Maurice of Nassau. Rio de Montagne was a name given to it. The French usually called it “Le Grande.” The Spanish called it “The River of the Moun-

tains." It was often called the " North river " in contradistinction to the " South river "—the Delaware.

That Henry Hudson was greatly pleased in exploring this river is not surprising. " There is no river in the western world comparable with it in picturesqueness and beauty, nor has it a superior, if an equal, in these respects, in Europe. In some stretches of the Clyde and the Rhine are features resembling the Hudson, and the Elbe has in sections, such delicately penciled effects, but no European river is so lordly in its bearing, none flows in such state to the sea." It has been said that no other river in the world presents so great a variety of views as the Hudson.

" Throughout its whole length, from the wilderness to the sea, from the Adirondacks to Staten Island, a distance of 325 miles, there is a combination of the finest pictures, illustrating some of the best scenery of the old world," which some quaint writer (to me unknown) describes as follows: " The tourist with only a slight stretch of the fancy may find Loch Katrine nestled among the mountains of our own Highlands; in the Catskills may be seen from Sunset Mountain of Arran; and

in the Palisades, the Giant's Causeway of Ireland." He divides the Hudson river into five stretches, reaches or divisions, representing five distinct characteristics, namely: Grandeur, Repose, Sublimity, The Picturesque, and Beauty.

1. The Palisades, an unbroken wall of rock for fifteen miles — *Grandeur*.
2. The Tappansee, surrounded by the sloping hills of Nyack, Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow — *Repose*.
3. The Highlands, where the Hudson for twenty miles plays "hide and seek" with hills "rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun" — *Sublimity*.
4. The Hill-sides, for miles above and below Poughkeepsie — *The Picturesque*.
5. The Catskills, on the west, throned in queenly dignity — *Beauty*.

George William Curtis, the great traveler, the close observer, the perfect gentleman, pronounced the Hudson grander than the Rhine, and Thackeray, in his "Virginians," has given the Hudson the verdict of beauty.

To New Yorkers it is a river dear, for there is scarcely a single settlement along its banks, from its origin to the sea, which has not some interesting tradition, some notable historic event, to relate.

The beauty and glory of such a river were not, unaided, sufficient to induce the pioneer to leave his home in civilization and go into a wilderness thousands of miles away. Such a river as the Hudson could not have its origin in a low, marshy country, and its flow seaward, in any but a healthy region, but the inducement to seek that country must be more than the mere sentiment of beauty. There must seem to be a prospect of bettering one's condition, so far as physical comforts, or civil and religious rights are concerned. Hudson, after his exploration of the Hudson river, on his return to Europe, took back there many very valuable furs which he obtained from the Indians in exchange for trinkets of little cost and of still less real value. This fur and peltry trade was eagerly sought by the Europeans, especially the French, English and Dutch, and the latter were greatly favored for a time, for the Indians from the far north and northwest came to or near Albany to market their goods and buy their supplies. In the years 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613 and 1614 enterprising Amsterdam merchants sent out vessels to and up the Hudson river to obtain furs and peltry and made large profits. In 1614 the territory

extending from Cape Cod to the Delaware river, places which Hudson in his third voyage had touched, was claimed by the Netherlands and called New Netherlands, and in that year the Holland government granted a special charter to a company of Amsterdam merchants and others of the United New Netherlands Company giving them the monopoly until January 1, 1618, of all travel and trade in the New Netherlands, during which time they were at liberty to make four voyages. For a period of five years, from 1618 to 1623, there seems to have been a free trade in the New Netherlands — presumably the fur trade proving less profitable.

June 3, 1621, the government of Holland, called the “Lords States General,” incorporated the Dutch West India Company, clothing it with almost kingly powers, to carry on trade and planting settlements from Cape Horn to Newfoundland for a term of twenty-four years.

Its special object was the jurisdiction and exclusive control in New Netherlands. Its government was to be composed of nineteen directors from the five different cities of Holland. The Amsterdam Chamber was to have control of New

Netherlands. The company was not fully organized until the spring of 1623. The English never recognized the Dutch claim for the territory called New Netherlands, and as early as 1613 demanded the surrender of the "Dutch trading house" on Manhattan Island, and ten years later the English Ambassador at The Hague protested against the encroachment of the Dutch fur traders — the English claiming the territory under the discoveries of the Cabots in 1497 and 1498. In April, 1623, thirty families, mostly Walloons, or French Protestants, came over and landed at New Amsterdam (New York) and eight of the families came up to Albany and there built Fort Orange near Steamboat Square, about two miles above Fort Nassau, built several years before.

Prior to the coming of the company of the Walloons to the New Netherlands the famous Pilgrim colony had received a patent granted by the Virginia Company giving them the right to settle "about the Hudson river," and when the "Mayflower" left Southampton, England, that was her destination, but mistaking the route and contrary winds drove her to the Massachusetts coast and there that colony was settled in 1620 at Plymouth

Rock. Had the Pilgrims settled in the New Netherlands in 1620 the result doubtless would have been different, but it is doubtful if it would have been better or even so good. It is well to bear in mind that the early settlements in New England were made by persons seeking to avoid persecution on account of their religious creeds, at variance with Roman Catholicism and the established Episcopal Church, and that they might found and establish a home where they could enjoy religious and civil rights. "The Pilgrims" settled at Plymouth in 1620 and "the Puritans" in Salem in 1629. Miles Standish was a prominent figure and character among the Pilgrims, though himself not a Pilgrim. Bradford, Brewster, Winslow, and Carver were the trusted leaders among the Pilgrims. Among the Puritans John Endicott and John Winthrop were easily the chiefs. The "*Puritans*" were members of the established (Episcopal) church. They sought to have that church purified. They wanted the clergy to give up wearing the surplice, making the sign of the cross in baptism and using the ring in the marriage service — Roman Catholic observances. The Separatists (afterward known

in America as the Pilgrims) were a branch of the Puritans — ultra Puritans who utterly repudiated Roman Catholic ceremonials and everything in imitation of or like and therefore separated from the established (Episcopal) church.

The Dutch did not come to the New Netherlands on religious considerations, for Holland tolerated religious freedom, but they came for gain — immediate gain from the fur and peltry trade. They did not early come to settle and for nearly twenty years after Hudson's exploration and glowing account of it very, very few indeed who came over to engage in, or employed in the fur trade, became settlers. It is said that Sarah Rapelje, a daughter of one of the Walloon settlers, born June 7, 1625, was the first white child born in the New Netherlands. The first reference to the population at Fort Orange (Albany) published seems to have been in a work published in Amsterdam in 1628, which says: "There are no families at Fort Orange. They keep twenty-five or twenty-six traders there."

The report made by the Nineteen in 1629 to the Lords States General said: "All who are inclined to do any sort of work here procure enough to eat

without any trouble and therefore are not willing to go far from home on an uncertainty." It was apparent that if the Dutch West India Company was to prove a success in the New Netherlands a different course must be pursued, for Virginia and New England were being settled and their territory, in many respects better, was not.

The Dutch West India Company, modeled after the Dutch East India Company, having powerful fleets, sailing along the coasts of South America and the West Indies, preying on the Spanish commerce, capturing their vessels and cargoes and amassing wealth thereby, sought to induce men of wealth, daring, and ambition to relieve them of the undertaking of settling and developing the New Netherlands, which, instead of a source of revenue, had become a burden. They hit upon what was called the *Patroon* scheme — based upon the Feudal System — a system of land tenure and service prevalent in Europe during the Middle Ages — a system inevitably tending to exalt the *Patroon* into a lordly baron and to degrade his subject into a serf.

One who sought the distinction of the title of a *Patroon* (or *Patron*) of New Netherlands was

entitled to hold as a perpetual inheritance, handing it down in the line of the oldest son, an estate having sixteen miles frontage on one side of a navigable river or eight miles on each side, extending as far into the country as the occupiers would permit. The Patroon must obtain Indian title, which usually cost but a trifle. He was empowered to hold civil and criminal courts on his estate and his decisions were practically final. He appointed the officers and magistrates in all the cities and towns in his territory. In order to be invested with this honor, these privileges and powers, he bound himself to take or send over at least fifty emigrants over fifteen years of age to settle on his patent within the next four years.

The emigrants taken or sent by the Patroons to New Netherlands were bound for a specified number of years as apprentices to serve their masters, agreeing not to hunt or fish without the master's permission, agreeing to grind their grain in his mill and pay his price for grinding. They were pledged not to weave any cloth for themselves or others, but to buy it from the company under the penalty of banishment. They were bound to pay rent in everything they produced.

The Patroon and his emigrants were to support a schoolmaster, a minister, and a comforter for the sick.

Such in brief was the Patroon system.

The most desirable locations for selections in the New Netherlands were along the Hudson and Delaware rivers, known, of course, by the directors of the Dutch West India Company; prominent among them was Kiliaen Van Rensselaer, a wealthy dealer in diamonds and pearls in Amsterdam.

Van Rensselaer, doubtless, informed of the great advantages of Albany, as the great rendezvous of the Indians to market their furs and near the confluence of the two most important rivers of New York, instructed his agents to obtain title from the Indians and he succeeded in procuring a princely estate along the Hudson river above and below Albany, a distance of twenty-four miles and extending east and west forty-eight miles — a territory ample for a kingdom — greater than the area of North Holland and very little less than that of South Holland.

Other directors of the Dutch West India Company promptly made what they thought the most

desirable locations along the Hudson river. Manhattan Island (New York) being reserved by the company, and along the Delaware — immense tracts, though none so extensive as Van Rensselaer's, and became Patroons. Such grants and under such circumstances soon excited jealousy and sharp criticism in Holland and the Patroons felt compelled to make concessions and yield some of their privileges.

Kiliaen Van Rensselaer was a man of energy and executive ability, and strove to increase the growth, importance, and prosperity of Rensselaerwyck in accordance with the Patroon system. It has been said that he visited his estate in the New Netherlands in 1637, but no proof has been found and the report is discredited. A distant landlord frequently is in ignorance, and sometimes designedly kept so, of the actual state of affairs in his estate, which would be remedied if he were present. The Patroon was represented in New Netherlands, when absent, by agents, partners, or directors. Kiliaen admitted into a limited partnership in his estate three prominent members of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company, namely, Samuel Godyn,

Johannes de Laet, and Samuel Blommaert, in order the sooner and more effectively to present to the public the attractions of Rensselaerwyck, and, presumably, also to abate the ill feeling against him in the Netherlands for his having taken advantage of his position to secure such an immense estate. Van Rensselaer dominated that partnership and again became sole proprietor. Kiliaen died in 1646 and his son, Johannes, then a minor, under the right of primogeniture, became Patroon and continued to be until 1658, when he died. His interests in Rensselaerwyck were cared for at first by Van Slechtenhorst, or until 1652, and then by the Patroon's half brother, Jan Baptiste.

In 1658 Jeremias, the second son of Kiliaen, became director and subsequently proprietor of Rensselaerwyck and was the first of the Patroons to reside in, or even visit, the estate in New Netherlands.

There were eight of the Van Rensselaers called Patroons, namely and in the order of primogeniture except in the case of Jeremias:

First.—Kiliaen, from 1629 to 1646.

Second.—Johannes, from 1646 to 1658.

Third.—Jeremias, from 1658 to 1674.

Fourth.—Kiliaen 2d, from 1674 to 1720.

Fifth.—Stephen, from 1720 to 1747.

Sixth.—Stephen 2d, from 1747 to 1769.

Seventh.—Stephen 3d, from 1769 to 1839.

Eighth.—Stephen 4th, from 1839 to 1868.

Under the Constitution and laws of the United States in 1787 the Rensselaerwyck could no longer be entailed and it was divided by Stephen 3d (the seventh Patroon) between his sons Stephen 4th (called Patroon merely by courtesy) and William Patterson — the former getting the mansion, title, and the estate in Albany, and the latter the estate east of the Hudson.

During the Patroonship of the Van Rensselaers — a period of about 150 years — many important events occurred, changing the relations of nations, the forms of government, and affecting Patroon interests. The Patroons were reputable men of affairs and some of them of superior abilities and generally discharged their duties creditably. To trace their acts through their rule would now be not only tedious but useless. There arose a controversy between the Dutch West India Company

and the Patroon concerning the territory surrounding Fort Orange (in Albany) built by the company, which was finally decided in favor of the Patroon, as the territory surrounding the fort and the fort itself was within his patent. The fur trade early was very important and as the English, claiming the territory under the right of prior discovery, sought this trade, their vessels sailed up the Hudson and set up trading posts. The Patroon attempted to prevent traders from coming to his colony to deal with the colonists and Indians and with that object in view ordered one Nicolaas Coorn to fortify Beeren Island (about eleven miles below Albany), a commanding position, and there demand of each skipper of a vessel passing, except those of the Dutch West India Company, a toll of five guilders (\$2) as a tax and also to lower his colors in honor of the Patroon. Govert Loockermans, sailing the vessel "Good Hope" up the river in 1644, was ordered, as he was passing the fort, to lower her colors, which he refused to do and Coorn gave him three cannon shots. In pursuing this course the Patroon virtually said, I own not only the territory on both sides of the river but the river itself for that distance.

The Patroon was compelled to back down and pay damages.

The Netherlands, an ancient kingdom, formerly included Belgium (now a separate kingdom, Brussels, its capital) and ten provinces besides North and South Holland, its largest and most important ones, with Amsterdam and The Hague as the capitals. Frequently the name of Holland is used when Netherlands should have been.

The Lords States General (in many respects like our Congress, composed of the Senate and House of Representatives) was the legislative body of the Netherlands, and in June, 1621, granted a charter to the Dutch West India Company, giving it the exclusive privileges, for a period of twenty-four years, as follows: To traffic on the coast and in the interior of Africa from the Tropic of Cancer to the Cape of Good Hope; in America and the West Indies with the power to make engagements, contracts, and alliances with the rulers and people designated in the charter; to build forts, to appoint and discharge officers, to advance the settlement of unoccupied territory, to enlarge the channels of commerce, and to multiply the sources of revenue.

The company was required to report, from time to time, its doings, and in the appointment of civil and military officers and instructions given to them the Lords States General were to be consulted and the commissions must bear their seal. If troops were needed the Lords States General would furnish them but the company must pay all the expenses. The charter intrusted the government of the company to five chambers of managers consisting of nineteen members, eight from the Amsterdam Chamber, four from the Zealand, two from the Maas, two from North Holland, two from the Frieland, and the government one.

This company, under its charter, introduced the Patroon system granting certain rights and privileges (very liberal ones and in some respects extraordinary) and reserving the traffic in furs and peltry and in manufactured goods and in the carrying trade, except along the Atlantic coast, in which the Patroons might engage, paying a fixed tribute.

The colonists might, with the permission of the Patroon and of the director of the Dutch West India Company, take up what unoccupied land they could work, paying an annual rent to the

Patroon. That rent was based upon the value of land primarily and was to be paid in so many bushels of wheat, rye, etc., so many pounds of butter, so many eggs and so many chickens, etc. Everything the colonists had to sell must first be offered to the Patroon. The Dutch West India Company was to furnish the Patroons troops if needed as against the colonies, the expense to be met by the landlords. The colonists couldn't leave the Patroon's service during the term fixed. The value of the land before cultivation and buildings ranged usually from ten cents to two dollars per acre. The tenant improved the land, built house and barn to live comfortably, and what was called "the Quarter Sale" seemed the most unreasonable, intolerable. To illustrate: Suppose the tenant occupied a farm originally valued at \$2 an acre for 200 acres, say \$400. He had improved it by cultivation, buildings, etc., until it became worth and he sold it for \$4,000. Then the Patroon demanded \$1,000. Four sales would give the Patroon the whole. The rent, of course, was paid annually, or should have been, and if there were arrears the Patroon claimed that that must come out of the remaining \$3,000.

The Netherlands primarily based their claim for the territory called New Netherlands on Henry Hudson's discovery (so called) of five degrees of north latitude, viz.: from 40° to 45° or from Delaware bay and river to Cape Cod, where he touched or explored in 1609. Great Britain claimed under the Cabots' discoveries, in 1497 and 1498, the whole stretch of the North Atlantic coast from Florida to Newfoundland. The French claimed a portion of northern Florida, which subsequently became a part (the sea coast) of Georgia, and the Spanish the rest of Florida. Virginia, under the English, late in the sixteenth and early in the seventeenth centuries, extended from Cape Fear up to what later became the southern boundary of Pennsylvania, and New England extended from Virginia to Nova Scotia. From 1609 until 1664 the Dutch held the New Netherlands and then were compelled to surrender the territory to the English under the grant of Charles II to James, his brother, the Duke of York and Albany, who, in 1685, became King of England under the title of James III. Great Britain never recognized the Dutch claim — always protested against it — but being engaged in wars almost constantly did not

use force to obtain possession before. "It had become important to dislodge the Dutch to prevent the smuggling of Virginia tobacco into England at a loss to that government of some \$50,000 in customs, and also to have an unbroken line of English colonies from Florida to Nova Scotia. The Dutch did not rely solely on Hudson's voyage on the Hudson, but none of their claims had validity and the colony of New Netherlands passed under British rule and the Patroon took the oath of allegiance to the English King, and English laws instead of Dutch henceforth prevailed in the colony.

As soon as the Patroons began to plant colonies in New Netherlands the directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company became jealous and opposed the Patroon system. In 1634 they bought off the two Patroons, Samuel Godyn and Samuel Blommaert (partners of Kiliaen Van Rensselaer), who had secured a tract on the shore of the Delaware bay making a territory of sixty-four miles in circumference, and also Michael Pauw, who had obtained Staten Island, Jersey City, and Harsimus, with the lands

adjacent. An effort was made to buy off Patroon Van Rensselaer, but he refused to sell.

While the New England colonies were rapidly increasing in population and prosperity, the New Netherlands was not. In 1647 the population of the New Netherlands was only about 1,000 or 2,000 less than in 1643. A new policy was ordered by the Lords States General so liberal that settlers could buy as few acres as they wished to and enjoy civil and religious freedom as did the English colonies north and south of them. Under the Patroon régime the Dutch colonists had less freedom, the enjoyment of fewer rights, and greater hardships to endure than in Holland. They were, as they saw things, imposed upon and serving masters who regarded them as slaves.

The gulf between the classes and the masses seemed to widen and deepen — on one side, lords and masters, and on the other side, subjects and serfs. The Patroon family of the Van Rensselaers by marriage and intermarriage were related to the Van Cortlands, Schuylers, Livingstons, and other wealthy families, not only in New Netherlands but also in Virginia, and although they had not castles, as the barons along the Rhine,

they had spacious mansions on their country estates where they spent their summers and in the winters went to Manhattan Island and in their places there gave royal entertainments to the élite. They had a retinue of black servants (slaves) in livery to attend them. The transplanting of the feudal system, even though somewhat modified, to the western world, where the very spirit of freedom, liberty, and equality prevailed, was doomed to failure and disaster. The principal cause was in the system itself, though the Van Rensselaer Patroons' course hastened its abrogation, terminating in blood. The most of the Van Rensselaer Patroons were liberal, lenient, and indulgent, permitting the rents to remain unpaid until they amounted to a sum equal to, or in some cases exceeding, the value of the leased land. It needed not the wisdom of a prophet to predict trouble from this course. When primogeniture was abolished the eldest son was no longer the inheritor of the estate, but all the children shared in it. Stephen (3d) Van Rensselaer, the seventh Patroon, born in 1764 and died in 1839, was in fact the last of the Van Rensselaer Patroons. He was graduated in Harvard in 1782, a doctor of

laws, the recipient of many and distinguished civil and military honors, and a devoted patriot, called "the good old Patroon," as soon as the law of primogeniture was abolished sought to dispose of the most of the Rensselaerwyck estate (which had been somewhat lessened by grants and sales) under a peculiar form of deed or conveyance to actual tillers of the soil. This title deed was called by some "a lease in fee" and by others "a sale in fee," reserving to himself in the conveyances and to his heirs and assigns all mines and minerals and all streams of water for mill purposes; and then certain old-time feudal returns, denominated rents payable annually at the manor house in Watervliet, such as a specified number of bushels of good clean wheat, four fat fowls, one day's service with carriages and horses, and finally the one-quarter part of the purchase price on every sale of land. The aim and intent was to perpetuate, if possible, and as far as possible, the interest of the Van Rensselaers in the estate. The estate remaining was divided by the two eldest sons, Stephen 4th getting that on the west side and William Patterson Van Rensselaer that on the east side of the Hudson river, and each all

the reservations of rents in their respective territories. "In 1839, when the said Stephen and William Patterson began to push their claim against the landholders and demand immediate payment of back rents, etc., the landholders, called 'anti-renters,' held a convention and appointed a committee to wait on Stephen Van Rensselaer and ascertain if an amicable settlement of the manor claims for rents in arrears could not be made and to learn on what terms a clear and absolute title to the land could be had. The committee, men of character, went to the manor office in 1839 to see and converse with Mr. Van Rensselaer, but the latter refused to recognize or even see the committee. He did, some time subsequently, send a letter to the chairman of that committee declining to sell on any terms. Great excitement was created in Albany county. The rent collectors were roughly treated and they were told that no rents would be paid. Sheriffs were called upon to discharge their duties and they were resisted and driven back by men masked and dressed in Indian costumes. The sheriff called to aid him the 'posse comitatus,' or power of the county, and marched 600 strong into the anti-rent

district, where they were turned back by 1,500 anti-renters. The sheriff reported the state of affairs to Governor William H. Seward, who immediately ordered out eight companies of militia under the command of Major Bloodgood. They met no resistance.

“The Patroon interest hoped the military ordered out by the Governor of the State would bring the anti-renters to their senses and induce them to pay up. The landholders or anti-renters hoped that their display of strength and resistance would induce the Van Rensselaers to offer terms of compromise which they could accept. Neither hope was realized. Then some lawyer who had dug into old English law books said the Patroon patent was invalid and the matter must go to the court for settlement. It became a political question at once. The anti-renters elected representatives in the Legislature from eleven counties and the new Governor favored them. The decisions of the courts seemed to alternate in favor of the Van Rensselaers and then in favor of the anti-renters. In 1852 the counsel of the Van Rensselaers advised them to sell their claims, for they believed they could not be sustained and that

advice was accepted. Some of the landholders or anti-renters accepted the terms offered.

“ Then appeared Walter S. Church, who bought the rest of the claims on speculation. He spared no labor, no expense in any direction which he thought might aid him. He magnificently entertained legislators, lawyers, and judges. He was indefatigable, exacting, demanding the utmost farthing. Ejectment suits were brought and several lives were sacrificed. The final decision was against the Van Rensselaers, and thus ended a long and bitter controversy growing out of the Patroon system.”

Who can estimate and properly accredit to the different nations of Europe their just due in the immigrants they sent to this country in its founding and subsequently in building up the United States as the greatest free republic on earth and the hope of the liberty-loving world? Thhe Dutch must be among the early named with excellent traits of character, and the Patroons deserve credit for first colonizing them here.

We do not want to try to conjecture what the results would have been if Hudson's exploration of the North river had been in the interest of

France or if the Pilgrims had settled in 1620 in the New Netherlands instead of New England.

Nearly 300 years have passed away since Henry Hudson, in the yacht "Half Moon," sailed over the waters of the river bearing his name and whose beauties he so greatly admired. That majestic, noble river continues to flow on from the mountains to the sea with a great unabated pure stream in its primeval beauty and loveliness. This statement must, however, be qualified, for man's greed, cupidity, has caused him in some localities to contaminate its waters and to mar and to an extent destroy its matchless palisades. Now that the governments have taken matters in hand it is to be hoped that these abuses will be summarily ended.

Art and architecture have embellished its banks by lovely gardens, parterres and magnificent residences and stately buildings. Attractive villages, great and prosperous cities crown the Hudson from the north and terminating in that unique, wonderful, greatest, truly cosmopolitan city of the world, New York. Nothing else did so much to produce these results as Fulton's application of steam to navigation and the opening up of a

through water transportation route from the Atlantic to the Great lakes. Then the application of steam as the motive power for railroads. When the Hudson river is ice-bound the Hudson River Railroad along its east bank and the West Shore Railroad along its west bank transport passengers and freight as they do the year around. The Dutch possession of the New Netherlands was short and when the English supplanted them the Dutch names of places, very generally, were changed to English ones. Manhattan island, called by the Dutch "New Amsterdam" during their rule, except from July, 1673, to October, 1674, when the Dutch recaptured and held the "New Netherlands" and called it "New Orange," was changed to New York in honor of the Duke of York and Albany, and has borne that name ever since—a city of many millions of inhabitants and billions of wealth, the site of which was bought by and for the Dutch of the Indians in 1626 for the sum of about twenty-four dollars paid for in trinkets. Among many other good things placed to the credit of the Dutch in New Netherlands is the fact that the Dutch West India Company established a good school in New

Amsterdam in 1633 which still flourishes under the name of the "School of the Collegiate Reformed Church," which is the oldest institution of learning in the United States, "The Boston Latin School," established in 1635, being the second, and Harvard College, established in 1636, the third.

The names of the site of Albany which, during Dutch rule, were Rensselaerwyck and Beverwyck (the latter including Fort Orange, built and maintained by the Dutch West India Company, and the land surrounding it, and the former the territory outside of the fort and belonging to the Patroon) were substituted by the name of Albany in honor of the Duke of York and Albany, a name it has borne ever since.

In 1783 the English colonies in North America were recognized as free and independent and formed the United States of America — the colonies organizing State governments — but 100 years before this the colony of New York demanded heaven-born rights and participation in making the laws governing them as the colonists of Virginia and Massachusetts had, and in the General Assembly of the colony of New York, held

in Fort James in the city of New York October, 1683, put on record what they called the " Charter of Liberties and Privileges."

The ten original counties of the colony of New York were Albany, Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Westchester, Richmond, Kings, Queens, Suffolk, and New York, formed under Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Dongan's administration, and sent representatives to the General Assembly. The boundaries of several of these counties have not been materially changed, Albany county embraced the whole territory lying north of Ulster and west of the Hudson river, taking in nearly the whole State. From its territory fifty of the counties of the State have been erected and it has appropriately been called " the mother of the counties of New York."

Albanians love their old Dutch city and will cordially join in commemorating Henry Hudson's advent to it nearly 300 years ago. Much has been said in this article about the Patroon system and the anti-renters, hoping to have these matters better understood by a statement of facts. Concerning affairs relating to Albany and vicinity, I have frequently referred to, quoted and used

“ Mr. Wiese’s History of the City of Albany,” 1884, and the “ Bi-centennial History of Albany and Schenectady Counties from 1609 to 1886, published by W. W. Munsell & Co., 1886.”

The article on “Anti-Rentism ” was written by the Hon. Andrew J. Colvin.

FRANK CHAMBERLAIN.

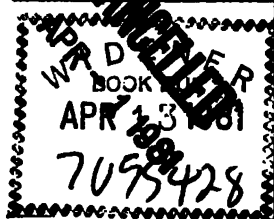
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